

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of the application. However, in view of the following remarks, the examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

35 USC 112:

The Examiner alleges that claims 2 and 8 are not clear, particularly with regard to the language defining “processing on each piece of color component data in a same manner”. That language means that the same correction processing is performed on all of the color component data. The examiner's attention is directed to the description of the second correction processing unit 700 in paragraphs [0095] through paragraph [0106] of the published application. However, the claimed invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments.

Accordingly, applicant submits that claims 2 and 8 satisfy the requirements of 35 USC 112.

Art Rejections:

Claims 1 – 3, 5, 7 – 9, 11, and 13 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,775,031, hereinafter Fujiwara, and assigned to the same assignee as the present application.

Claim 1 defines an image processing apparatus for correcting data of each pixel in an edge area. The apparatus includes a first judgment unit for judging whether a target pixel is in a first edge area and a second judgment unit for judging whether the target pixel is in a second edge area having a lower intensity variation level than the first edge area. In a preferred embodiment, this distinction is made by

comparing the difference in pixel density (intensity). See the description of the second area judgment unit 500 in paragraph [0057].

In paragraph 2 of the Official Action, the Examiner compares the first judgment unit for judging whether a target pixel is in a first edge area of claim 1 to the halftone dot detector 182 of Fujiwara.

In the preferred embodiment of Fujiwara, the halftone dot detector 182 analyzes the brightness data of a pixel and determines if it is an isolated point. The relative area is determined to be a halftone image if the number of isolated points is below a threshold level. See column 5, lines 1 – 22. Accordingly, the halftone dot detector 182 determines if a pixel is in a halftone area. It does not determine if the pixel is in an edge area.

Accordingly, Fujiwara does not anticipate claim 1. In addition, Fujiwara cannot be applied under 35 USC 103 because 35 USC 103(c) does not permit it to be applied under 35 USC 103 since Fujiwara is assigned to the same assignee as the present application.

Independent claims 7 and 13 are patentable over Fujiwara for the same reasons. The dependent claims 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, and 11 depend from claims 1 and 7 and are thus also patentable.

Claims 4, 6, 10, and 12 have been rejected under 103(a) as being obvious over Fujiwara in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,357,353. However, Fujiwara cannot be applied under 35 USC 103 because 35 USC 103(c) does not permit it to be applied under 35 USC 103 since Fujiwara is assigned to the same assignee as the present application.


Accordingly, the Examiner is also requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections of claims 4, 6, 10, and 12.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this response, or the application in general, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney in order to expedite prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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